1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES ON THE WASHO

BY

ROBERT H. LOWIE

I. INTRODUCTION

A SKETCH by Barrett, mainly relating to museum specimens, Kroeber's list of kinship terms, Hudson's notes on games in Culin's monograph, and a few mythological texts by Dangberg constitute our technical sources on the Washo.[1] Several weeks at Minden, Nevada (informant, Dave Cheney), and at Coleville, California (principal informants, Jack Pitts and Bill Cornbread), in 1926 supplied the data here offered.

The Washo (waco, woco), classed either as an isolated stock or as an aberrant Hokan group, ranged about Lake Tahoe (t'i''yeli ta''au), residing in westernmost Nevada and easternmost California. Carson City, Reno, Minden, and Gardnerville, Nevada, fall within ancient Washo territory, as do Truckee, Tallac, and Woodfords, California. According to Barrett, even a small region west of the Sierra, on the headwaters of the Mokelumne, Calaveras, and Stanislaus rivers, falls within the Washo area. Kroeber sets their total number in 1770 at possibly 1500, one-third of the total being in California, where more recent figures indicate approximately 300. But separatism was extreme: Jack Pitts had been to Lake Tahoe a single time, political units hardly embraced more than six or seven families, and only festivals united larger gatherings.

Bill distinguished the Washo about Woodfords and of Antelope Valley as ha'ɣale'lt'i, those near Minden and Gardnerville being p'a''walu, and the Reno Washo we'lmelt'i. Though distinct, these groups had never waged war with one another. Bill associated the Washo with Mountain House and Bagley Valley but did not consider Antelope Valley ancient Washo territory, rather assigning it to the "Paiute," that is, Paviotso. When about 30, he himself came there, and at that time there were not many Washo in that locality.

Three alien tribes figure prominently: the "Paiute," that is, Paviotso (pa''le.u), whom the Carson Valley Washo sometimes visited near the Walker River; the "Digger," that is, Maidu (teobi'muc), about Placerville and Colfax; and "another kind of Digger" (tannu'), distinct in speech from the Maidu,—presumably Miwok. The two former were definitely noted as periodically hostile, the Washo trying to exclude both from Lake Tahoe. The Maidu often took game away from the Washo, even killing them, and thus precipitated fighting.

[1] S. A. Barrett, The Washo, PMM-B 2:1-52, 1917. Grace Dangberg, Washo Texts, UC-PAAE 22:391-443, 1927. A. L. Kroeber, Handbook of the Indians of California, BAE-B 78:569-573, 944, 1925. S. Culin, Games of the North American Indians, BAE-B 24:199, 265, 323 f., 335, 396, 523, 664, 704, 1907.

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2: Barrett E-5 (no date) 1917 NT20 Washo NT20

136 174 chiefly by the rabbit and various other small mammals; that of the Sierra region by larger mammals, such as the mountain sheep, deer, and bear.

[133] Even in the arid section of this area there were fairly large streams fed by the melting snows of the high Sierra, and fish of various kinds were abundant. In fact fishing was a highly important vocation, even of the Paiute living over in the region still farther to the east, especially about Pyramid, Winnamucca, and Walker lakes. In the higher mountain section of the Washo country, notably at Lake Tahoe, fishing was, perhaps, the most important phase of this culture. The heavy snows made these higher altitudes undesirable for winter residence, but the Indians spent much time there during the summer months, attracted especially by the abundance of lake trout.

[226] [132] [221]

101 174 177 Of the two environments of the Washo, that of the arid Great Basin rather predominated, which fact, combined with the facility of communication and the consequently more frequent association of the Washo with their eastern neighbors than with those to the west, produced a culture in which Great Basin features are somewhat in the ascendancy. However, there are many features of the Washo culture which are very similar to those of the Miwok and Maidu of the California area.

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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

177 182 Since the coming of the whiteman and the consequent dispossession of the Indians, the social system of the Washo has been largely disrupted. The following outline of their social organization, therefore, depicts the aboriginal condition of the Washo, though at the present time no villages in the old sense remain, and chieftainship is largely nominal.

621 [594] The social organization of the Washo is primarily based upon the family unit. The village community is the largest division and each village is entirely distinct from all the others. Apparently there is no approach to a tribal organization, though this exists among the tribes immediately to the east.

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2: Barrett E-5 (no date) 1917 NT20 Washo NT20

ketry. In having a considerable number of geometric patterns bearing descriptive names, accompanied by modifying terms, they also resemble certain tribes of the California area. 171

The similarities of the Washo culture to that of the Great Basin region to the east, on the other hand, are very strikingly shown in the fact that the foods are almost identical, and in that very similar methods are employed in securing the same. Especially is this the case in certain nets used in fishing and rabbit hunting, and in the methods employed in handling the piñon nut and other vegetal foods. The twined basketry of the Washo resembles very closely in many respects that of the Great Basin culture, and certain stone implements, particularly the metate and muller, are also very similar to those used in that area.

While otherwise the social organization of the Washo appears to have been in aboriginal times very simple, the absolute control exercised by the "rabbit boss," or hunting chief, over all matters pertaining to communal hunting and fishing, presents a very interesting and peculiar feature of the Washo culture. 621 624

It will thus be seen that the Washo culture has certain strong affinities with that of the California area and also with that of the Great Basin area, but that in general it is somewhat more closely allied to the latter than to the former. This is but natural on account of the situation of the Washo, which is largely within the Great Basin, and on account of the facility of communication and easy interchange of culture between them and the several Great Basin tribes immediately to the east, particularly those about Walker lake and in the lower Carson valley. This influence of the tribes to the east was accentuated by the relative difficulty of interchange with the California tribes living on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, who on account of the deep snows of winter were accessible to the Washo only during a part of the year, and with whom communication was difficult at all times on account of this rugged mountain barrier. 171 177

Milwaukee, Wisconsin,
May 10, 1917.

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[P. 374, A]

DREAMS AND DREAMERS

(2566)

991
[756] [624] Mentioned almost as frequently as doctors are dreamers, whom the Washo view as distinct from shamans. The so-called antelope shaman and rabbit boss fall into this category rather than that of doctor.

Dreamers were gifted with a power to foretell special classes of events in dreams. All Washo believe [828] dreams are likely to foretell the future, and they are alert to find meanings in any dreams they have. Certain persons, those thought of as "dreamers," are reported to have special gifts of this nature.

There are apparently no dreamers among the Washo today, in the sense that the term was used in times past. That is, no one is especially singled out as having infallible dreams foretelling certain classes of [178] events. It may be that the breakdown of the band structure, which was related to economic exploitative activity, in effect, forced everyone to dream for himself. In 987 the past, dreamers were particularly important in set-[756] ting the time and place for activities which were carried out by large groups, such as hunting, fishing, pine-nut gathering, and war. With the disappearance [621] of the last seminomadic bands in the middle 1920's, as well as with the reduced importance of hunting and [178] fishing as group activities, persons having dreams which directed group actions were no longer useful. Today, dreams appear to occur to a number of individuals, and those felt to be of social significance usually deal with catastrophe or other foreboding subjects. The following stories were told to me by the widow under the shadow of witchcraft. When I asked her if she thought any of her friends would tell me their dreams, she replied: "No I don't think no Washo would tell you their dreams. But I'm not superstitious about them things and I'll tell you these two dreams I had."

"One summer I was up at the Lake [Tahoe] with my husband and I had a dream that the gambling house at [539] Dresslerville [a structure known officially as the community center] was on fire. There was kids inside and they was screaming but there wasn't no water. I saw the men all around with buckets but they couldn't do nothing because there wasn't no water. I told my husband about the dream the next morning and he said I [828] should take a bath and pray. That's what we do to keep a bad dream from happening."

The following winter the community center did in fact burn down. A young Indian in a rage after having an argument with his father hurled a bottle of kerosene against a wood stove. The resulting fire could not be extinguished because the Dresslerville pump was not working. Whether the dream was really a prophecy after the fact I do not know. It is significant in any case that the prophecy appeared in the form of a dream. My informant's second dream foretold the violent death of a young Indian woman. The prophecy came true two years later.

Her statement that other Washo would be reluctant to discuss their dreams was all too true, confirming the importance that dreams play in their daily lives. A number of tangential remarks suggest that the belief that dreams confer advance knowledge of the future and that

Inheritance
is essentially lacking, but rights in eagle series and certain pinenut groves did pass on from the father and mother to their children. The Washo had a kind of "moiety" division for games at festivals, but these appear to relate more to residence than kinship.

The major concrete kinship group was the extended family. It occupied a single house (galis dangal) and was composed of one, sometimes two, nuclear families who were consanguinally related. A few more distant relatives or even non-relatives were often attached.

The household, in addition to being the primary kinship group, was also the basic economic and political group. It was in theory and practice an autonomous, sovereign unit of society. Beyond the household, in the wider groupings of social organization, the divisions are not clearly defined. For present purposes we can say that the levels of social organization were (1) the household (called here galis dangal after the name of the winter house), (2) the community (angale atega, "houses together"), (3) the band, and (4) the tribal territorial divisions (w¢lm¢lti, pauwalu, and hangal¢lti).

There was no generic term for bands, and these, as all actual groups of people, were referred to by the name of their geographical location or the personal names of band members. The "band" is defined here as several cooperating communities from the same sector of Washo territory which came together for antelope and rabbit drives, puberty ceremonies, and other social occasions. The Washo living in the vicinity of the town of Woodfords today thus constitute a band. They comprise a collection of four communities scattered around Woodfords with close ties with the few Washo who live in neighboring Markleeville and Paynesville. Band lines were weak and existed more by the facts of economic cooperation and general social relations than by kinship or political leadership.

Washo bands had a less "corporate" character than those described by Steward (1938) for the aboriginal Owens Valley Paiute and certain Great Basin bands that developed after the introduction of the horse. The corporate character of the Owens Valley Paiute bands is seen in band ownership and defense of hunting and seed territories, a band chief, and band cooperation in a communal sweat house and communal irrigation.

It appears that an older man (often complemented by his wife) who was economically active would attract a following of several related, and perhaps some unrelated, households to form a community around a spring or along a stream. There was no structural position for headman (d¢tumo) beyond the

1. These two cases may be simply extensions of levirate privileges since the second marriages were to younger brothers. In one case the older brother was crippled.

Mormons recalled to Utah by Brigham Young.

1858 - The Comstock Lode was discovered at Virginia City and in the next two years an estimated 20,000 people came into Washo territory in the "rush to Washoe". 175

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The newspaper "Territorial Enterprise" began in Genoa.

The telegraph line reached Genoa from Placerville.

1859 - The Carson Valley Indian Agent, Major J. Dodge (1859) wrote "The Washo Nation number about 900 souls, and inhabit the country along the base of the Sierra Nevada mountains, from Honey Lake on the north, to the west fork of Walker's River on the south. They are divided into three different bands. 'Capt. Jim's' band is located in the vicinity of Carson, Washo, and Eagle Valleys, and Lake Bigler. This band numbers 145 men, 110 women, and 87 children. Total - 342. I have had talk with this band and given them some presents. 'Capt. Jim' is the head of the nation. 175 161 131 175 621 162 622

'Pos-Larke's'band is located in Little Valley between the east and west forks of Carson River, and numbers about the same as Capt. Jims band, 340.

'Deer-Dicks' band lives in and claims Long Valley southeast from Honey Lake, and numbers about 300.

...I would here recommend that a large extent of country be taken up, and all in one body, and to concentrate the whole 'Py-Ute' and 'Wa-Sho' Nations upon it, making one expense do for both. 175

...A few days ago a Wa-Sho died from actual starvation and exposure in the vicinity of Lake Bigler which is situated in the 'Sierra Nevada Mountains,' and another was found dead at the base of those mountains yesterday from the same cause." [165]

The severe winter this year was blamed on the Whites by the Washo. [821]

Commercial fishing began by Whites on Lake Tahoe when the "Fishery" was established on the southeast shore of the lake (Scott 1957). [648]

Isaac L. Roop became the 1st Governor of "Nevada Territory" and J. B. Blake hosted the 1st territorial legislature.

1860 - Battle of Pyramid Lake, involving the Northern Paiute and Whites.

5,000 acres of land under cultivation on the East Fork of the Carson River. 10,000 head of cattle, horses, and hogs were pastured in [648]

344 177 [668] was performed (Dangberg n.d.). This eight sided structure and the nine sided "round house" built around 1940 by Ben Lancaster for meetings of the Native American Church near Coleville, California were innovations and not part of traditional Washo architecture.

Property and Inheritance

423 Washo groups had no communal property beyond the land they lived on and its resources. Some joint ownership of property occurred however. The kin group's common rights in specific pinenut picking grounds (dimasha) and eagle nests (pataimi mᵋgi) are a form of joint property. Steward (1938, 256) described family ownership of pinenut groves among the Owens Valley Paiute, a rarity within the Great Basin.

The Washo thought of themselves as co-users of the territory along with the plants, animals, and a host of supernaturals. The rights of these other users had to be respected. Individuals or households could establish semi-permanent exclusive rights over specific locations for use purposes. A fish blind constructed over a deep place along a stream established the right of the person or household that had constructed it to fish in that [425] area. When the fish blind was abandoned for the season anyone else could use it; but the person who made the fish blind had established a right to return to that spot the following year.

422 Food or manufactured goods could be used or exchanged, but not destroyed. [782] The exception to this was ceremonial disposal where there was a ritual requirement to destroy the goods (see p.47). Also individuals who infringed upon others' traditional pinenut picking grounds may have their baskets and [685] other gathering equipment destroyed for them by the rightful owners of that picking ground.

A connection was believed to obtain between the objects and the persons who made them. In Washo society every manufactured object was personalized [768] in this way. The intimate connection between objects and persons is seen in the abandonment or destruction of the goods a deceased individual had [431] made, even if the goods had been given to someone else. In a sense, the maker always maintained partial ownership in any objects he produced.

● 621 Each Washo local group owned for use-purposes the hunting territory, fishing streams, and springs that it actually used. If the members of a cluster 423 of cooperating households regularly hunted in a certain area, their right to exclusive hunting in that area emerged over time. Informants say that a person had a theoretical right to hunt anywhere, but in practice he hunted in a fairly limited area. This was in part due to the accessibility of the hunting area with regard to a group's habitual wintering grounds. It was also due to the intimate knowledge that a hunter gains of a limited section of the total hunting territory. But it also derived from the concept of local group prerogatives, and the necessity to receive permission when intruding upon recognized sub-territories.

Pinenut picking grounds and eagle aeries were owned for exclusive use purposes by kinship groups. It appears that these traditional forms of private ownership developed as an institutionalization of the personalization of property and rights obtained through use.

Inheritance is a transfer of ownership from a deceased person to a living person or persons. It is based on a pre-existing relationship between the deceased and his successors, is personal, and usually traditional (Hoebel 1958, 458). Generally in primitive societies inheritance of chattel goods follows the sexual division because the distinction between men and women's goods is so complete. Also land tenure is generally communal with some kinship and residence group modification.

Among the Washo the complete destruction of a person's goods at his death precludes inheritance of chattel property. Real estate is essentially communal and for the tribe, inalienable. Hank Pete said that when "Captain Jim" (Gumalanga) received two sacks of flour for the land around the present town of Genoa, Nevada from John Reese in 1851 he had no concept of alienating the land. John Reese thought he had bought land while Captain Jim thought he had merely received a gift in exchange for providing the strangers temporary use of lands.

Though modification of the communal nature of real estate came in the case of pinenut groves and eagle aeries, this modification is not subject to inheritance in the full sense. It is more a heritage by virtue of birth, rather than inheritance by virtue of death. There was, for example, no transfer of ownership of eagle nests when a person died; individuals, however, referred to their relationship with the deceased in order to reaffirm their rights to the baby eagles.

Division and Specialization of Labor

Division of labor within the household called for the women to do the general gathering of seeds, nuts, roots, berries, and insects. The women cooked, made baskets, and tended the children. The men hunted, carried water, gathered firewood, prepared the skins, and made most of the clothing, fiber cords, rabbit skin blankets, rabbit nets, and hunting and fishing gear. Men and women both gathered pinenuts, fished, and worked in the construction of houses. This division of duties was not rigid so that each sex knew and participated in activities of the other sex.

Division of labor by age was related to ability and the development of skills. Soon after a child began to walk he was given small tasks to do and ability and responsibility was expected to increase gradually with age. By puberty the individual was a full contributor to the household. With old age the more sedentary crafts such as basketry and net making were emphasized.

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The Washo lacked well tailored clothing necessary for extensive winter travel. Their techniques of production were geared to small scale household use so that tradeable surpluses were rarely acquired. The Washo were organized into small scale groupings with few specilizations of labor. They lacked adequate storage techniques for fish and game so that surpluses in these foods were not preserved. Also inter-tribal frictions and hatreds often prevented safe travel outside of Washo territory. There are indications that once the Whites established an effective government over Washo and surrounding territory, trade and marriage between Indians from different tribes increased significantly. The Carson Indian Boarding School, established in 1890, became an important factor in developing intertribal cooperation by providing a situation in which individuals from several tribes could meet and become friends.

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Certain kinds of goods were particularly heavy in the trade traffic of aboriginal Great Basin and California. Davis (1961, 12-4) gives an idea of what these items were in California. In order of importance they were marine shells and beads, salt, basketry, hides and pelts, bows, acorns, fish, pinenuts, obsidian, pigments, miscellaneous vegetal foods, rabbit skin blankets, arrows, and a number of less important items.

In one table Davis (ibid., pp. 12-4) lists 83 traded items. The Washo used 53 of these items. Except for five items made of marine shells and "Caucasian goods", all 53 of the items used by the Washo were gathered or made by the Washo.

Pacific coast beads and pendants were used for personal adornment, but they were unimportant in face of the competition with local shell, plant, bone, and stone materials.

It is probable that all of the 53 items in the list by Davis were occasionally received by Washo from non-Washo through trade. Even items that were abundant within Washo territory such as pinenuts, fish, basketry, and rabbit skin blankets may have been received by trade in special instances. Lists of things traded are of little value unless they reflect volume.

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The goods most exported to the Miwok and Maidu were salt, pinenuts, obsidian, skins, and several Washo manufactures such as rabbit skin blankets and basketry. In return the Washo received principally acorns, soaproot for combs and brushes, a variety of medicinal plants, and occasionally manufactures such as baskets and yew bows. Few acorns were received by the Washo through trade unless the local crop was poor. All the other plants traded were received primarily through gathering and not trade.

Both Davis (1961) and Sample (1950), in their summaries of California trade, repeated a view held by Barrett and Gifford (1933, 193, 221). It is

these mechanisms may be found in other economies in the world along the continuum of technological complexity. 433 [171]

Political Authority and the Economy

Sahlins (1960, 408) writes that "In primitive economies, most production is geared to use of the producers or to discharge of kinship obligations, rather than exchange or gain...control of the means of production is decentralized, local, and familial...economic relations of coercion and exploitation and the corresponding social relations of dependence and mastery are not created in the system of production...in the absence of the incentive given by exchange of the product against a great quantity of goods on a market, there is a tendency to limit production to goods that can be directly utilized by the producers." These statements fit the Washo case and help to explain why the investment of political authority and the possession of wealth are not associated in Washo society.

The ability to produce economic goods, and personal generosity, were two of the most respected qualities in individuals. Men who had these qualities were often given a degree of political authority. That is, their advice was respected and followed. In the broad view, political authority was the result of conformance to a configuration of obligations: economic, religious, kinship, etc. [577]

Sociopolitical Groups and the Economy

Steward (1938, 257-262) presents a theory for the development of sociopolitical groups in the Basin-Plateau area. In his view these groups were conditioned by their varying ecological adjustments. 621 433 22

"The subsistence habits required in each region determined the size, nature, and permanency of population aggregates. These, in turn, predetermined many, though not all, features of social structures and political controls. In some regions, as among Western Shoshoni, exigencies of existence permitted little variation in the general sociopolitical patterns. When, however, ecology allowed latitude in subsistence activities, noneconomic factors, such as warfare, festivals, ceremonies, etc., became determinants of the sociopolitical patterns."

"Among the Western Shoshoni and many of their Northern Paiute and Southern Paiute neighbors it was physically impossible for families either to remain in one place for any considerable time or for more than a few families to remain in permanent association. The outstanding sociopolitical units, [171]

consequently, were the biological family and the small winter village, consisting of a loose aggregate of families...Because...of the erratic occurrence of wild seeds and the frequent variation of terrain covered, alliance did not always bring together the same families or village members. Habitual cooperation of the same people and therefore the development of fixed if limited political allegiances and controls was impossible. Likewise, habitual and exclusive utilization of particular territories by certain groups could not develop...Though kinship ties were important, the uncertainties of residence and of assured association with specific relatives prevented the development of an elaborate and nicely fixed set of kinship duties and obligations..."

Also ecology "permitted, if it did not cause, band development" in Owens Valley and "in late pre-Caucasian times among the Northern Shoshoni and probably the Ute."

The present writer has tried to show that "warfare, festivals, ceremonies, etc." should not be called "noneconomic", although they may be predominantly something other than economic. All groupings have some economic dimensions. However, Steward's point is well taken. He implies that as the natural abundance of food increased or the techniques of exploitation and transportation improved the nature of groupings became less determined by the search for food.

This present writer accepts the major outlines of Steward's theory, but must add that it was not entirely true for the Washo. The Washo had one of the more productive natural environments in the Great Basin and this was reflected in their being closer in form of sociopolitical groupings to the Owens Valley Paiute than the Western Shoshoni. However, when we compare seasonal variations of aboriginal social organization it is clear that predominantly economic activities determined the nature of groupings in the abundant summer as well as the meager winter.

Also Washo sociopolitical groupings were not radically altered by the comparatively abundant food made available by Whites. There is support for the idea that the cultural traditions behind sociopolitical grouping have some degree of internal dynamics and resistence to change, apart from economic changes, in the facts of Washo acculturation.

Barriers to Economic Development

The Washo lived in an area of abundance for a hunting, fishing, and gathering economy. They used this abundance to an advantage and, for a Great Basin tribe, had a dense population. Still they were surprisingly low in economic development. Kroeber (1939, 137) ranked the Washo on the

[P.361, B]

surance policies. Some bitterness has been caused by beneficiaries who refuse to share insurance money with their siblings, since the latter would have inherited equally under the old system. Another change is that wives and husbands can now inherit from each other, and a third change is that parents can inherit money from their children if the latter die first. In aboriginal times, only consanguine relatives inherited, and these in descending order.

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KINSHIP GROUPS

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The Washo lacked sibs, lineages, and clans. The family was usually nuclear, often with a few, more distant relatives attached. The Washo formerly practiced polygyny and therefore possibly had some polygynous families. Whether these reached a frequency of 20 per cent, a level which Murdock uses to distinguish between societies with polygynous families (1949, p. 28) and those with monogamous families, cannot now be determined. My informants regard the old Washo family as nuclear, and it will be so classified here. The modern Washo family is nuclear but usually includes a few, more distant relatives.

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The Washo formerly had a weak system of agamous moieties whose only apparent function was to oppose each other in games at the pine-nut dance. One moiety was called ɓéwiɛlɛl ɬáyadi?, which means roughly "those who camp on the east side" (of the camp circle) or dípɛk gumlámu, meaning "people of the white paint." Lowie gives a third name, ɓalaɬ·si (Lowie's transcription). The other principal moiety was called tágɛlɛlɛl ɬáyadi?, which can be translated approximately as "those who camp on the west side" (of the camp circle). Members of this moiety painted themselves red and were also called sawéwaq gumlámu, "people of the red paint." Members of a third "moiety" were called dayaɬsilgí·ɬ ɬáyadi? (also dawɬsilgí·ɬ ɬáyadi?), meaning "those who camp in the corner" (of the camp circle) or "those who camp in between" (the other two moieties). They lived between the east and west moieties in the camp circle and were divided between them for purposes of playing games. This third moiety seems to have had the sole function of supplying additional members to the teams representing the other two moieties. Despite this third group, the system was fundamentally dual (Lowie, 1939, p. 304). The moiety system does not exist today.

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A person belonged to the moiety of his father, which often was his mother's moiety also. Nancy Emm reports that when persons of different moieties married, they could join whichever moiety they wished. Hank Pete claims that a woman joined her husband's moiety. Lowie says that in the hand game, a man could leave his own moiety and join his opponents if they were luckier (Lowie, 1939, p. 304).

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Two kinds of kin groups that frequently occur in bilateral societies are demes and kindreds. The deme, says Murdock (1949, pp. 62-63),

> . . . is most clearly observable in the endogamous local community which is not segmented by unilinear consanguineal groupings of kinsmen. By virtue of the rule or strong preference for local endogamy, the inhabitants are necessarily related to one another through intermarriage, although they cannot always trace their exact kinship connections. They are consequently bound to one another not only by common

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residence but also by consanguinity, as is, in fact, usually specifically recognized. Within such a group the only social structuring is commonly into families, which may be of either nuclear, polygamous, or extended type. Except for family ties, the strongest sense of identification is usually with the community as a whole, which is viewed as a consanguineal unit in relation to other communities in a manner quite comparable to the attitude toward one's own sib in a unilinear society.

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Murdock believes that the Washo may have had demes (1949, p. 63). This would be important to know, since demes are thought to exert an influence on kinship terminology. They are associated with kinship terminology of the *generation* type in ego's generation only (Murdock, 1949, pp. 158-161). I endeavored to discover whether the Washo had had demes and could find no evidence of their former existence. Murdock may have based his opinion on a sentence in Barrett: "The village community is the largest division and each village is entirely distinct from all others" (1917, p. 8). From the context, I interpret this to mean only that each village was politically independent. The principal feature of the deme, the fact that it is an endogamous community viewed by its members "as a consanguineal unit in relation to other communities," was apparently lacking among the Washo. Lowie's description of a Washo village would deny the existence of demes. His informant said that the neighbors who lived about thirty feet away were not kin (1939, p. 303). Demes clearly do not exist among the Washo today.

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The kindred is the commonest type of bilateral kinship group. In our society, it includes that group of near relatives who are expected to attend weddings, funerals, graduations, holiday dinners, and family reunions. Members of kindreds visit freely and support one another when they are in difficulty. Kindreds in other societies have comparable characteristics and functions (Murdock, 1949, pp. 56-57).

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The Washo do not appear to have groups of relatives which satisfy these criteria. During ceremonies, the girl's puberty dance, and funerals are attended by all interested Washo; and relatives outside the nuclear family seem to have no special functions. A Washo expects help from members of his nuclear family, but

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more distant relatives have no particular obligations.

8: Merriam& d'Azevedo E-4, 5 (1954-1955) 1957
NT20 Washo NT20

Washo Peyote Songs

ALAN P. MERRIAM
Northwestern University
AND
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Northwestern University

I

The Washo

THE Washo people of Nevada and California have been described linguistically as a small Hokan-speaking group among the Shoshonean-speaking peoples of the Great Basin (Kroeber 1907; Lowie 1939). They formerly inhabited a relatively abundant territory extending from Honey Lake in the north to Antelope Valley and Sonora Pass in the south, and from the Pinenut Range east of Carson Valley in Nevada to Lake Tahoe and the summit of the Sierra-Nevada Mountains of California in the west. Present population is variously reported at between 400 and 1000 individuals; the figures on file at the Nevada Indian Agency in Stewart, Nevada, support the larger estimates.

The Washo were formerly distributed in small, band-like communities composed of semi-exogamous extended families which made use of the full range of their diversified setting in hunting and gathering, and were thus a highly mobile population. In recent times, however, there has been an increasing tendency to cluster in small colonies in or near the older white settlements of Nevada and California, and on the few remaining allotment acres provided by the government many years ago. The major source of money-income for families is provided by those members who are employed as laborers on road-construction gangs, ranches, and farms. A few women work as servants in the towns and resorts. There is little use of the land for agricultural purposes, while hunting, fishing, and gathering still provide an important part of subsistence. Despite the often drastic conditions of acculturation during the past one hundred years, the Washo have maintained considerable homogeneity as an ethnic and cultural minority.

The Peyotists

Peyotism among the Washo is scarcely more than twenty years old, having been introduced by one Ben Lancaster, a member of the tribe who had learned the ritual and ideology during a long sojourn among eastern and southern tribes. In 1936 he started the proselyting which resulted in the creation of an enthusiastic group of Washo and Paiute adherents during the period 1936–39. By 1940, however, the movement had already become defunct, and meetings were no longer held in Washo territory. Ben Lancaster continued to preside over the embittered and secretive remnants of the cult, which consisted of a handful of loyal Paiute and a very few Washo members. He also erected an

The Washo had weak agamous moieties whose only apparent function was to oppose each other in games at the annual pinenut dance (Freed, 1960, 361). Actually, three "moieties" were present, but one of them divided its members between the other two when participating in games; hence, the system was fundamentually dual. A person belonged to his father's moiety, which often was also his mother's moiety. When people of different moities married, they could join whichever moiety they wished. One of our male informants claims that a woman always joined her husband's moiety. Lowie says that in the hand game, a man could leave his own moiety and join the opposite moiety if it were having better luck (Lowie, 1939, 304). The moiety system does not exist today.

Settlements were very small. Lowie (1939, 303) states that the usual settlement had two to four houses, and that no village had as many as 10 houses. Neighbors were often kinsmen, but they might also be non-relatives. Modern Washo settlements are much larger than aboriginal ones; the largest, Dresslerville, Nevada, has a population of approximately 200.

Marriage

Curtis (1926, 97) and Barrett (1917, 9) report that polygyny was formerly practiced. Barrett notes that monogamy was as prevalent as polygyny. Lowie (1939, 309) says that both sororal and nonsororal polygyny existed, with a tendency to favor the sororal form because the Washo believed that strange women will fight. Barrett says that a man's choice of subsequent wives was not restricted. Both the sororate and the levirate occurred. Both were correct but not compulsory, according to Lowie. Curtis states that a widow had to marry her husband's brother if he desired her. Our informants support Lowie, both with regard to the preference for sororal as opposed to nonsororal polygyny and the noncompulsory character of the levirate. Polygyny, the sororate, and the levirate are no longer practiced. Many of the modern Washo contract a series of monogamous marriages with the earlier ones often of short duration and the later ones lasting considerably longer. Some Washo remain with their original marriage partners for life.

Role Behavior

The following descriptions of the role behavior of relatives in ego's generation and the first ascending and descending generations are based on the role profile test. The relatives of the second and third ascending and descending generations were not included when the test was given. However, a

SOME ASPECTS OF WASHO LIFE CYCLE

by John A. Price

121

The intent of this paper is to present a descriptive report of practices concerning birth, puberty, marriage, and death among the Washo as they have been reconstructed through elder Washo informants after more than a century of contact with whites.

127 The author is indebted to Grace Dangberg of Minden, Nevada, for the extensive use of her unpublished field notes. Miss Dangberg worked among the Washo between 1917 and 1920, sponsored in part by a University of [128] California research grant. Miss Dangberg was the major contributor to the section on childbirth, although the author is responsible for the analysis and 114 interpretations throughout the paper. The author worked among the Washo 122 in the summer of 1961, supported by a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship.

Childbirth

843
513 A pregnant woman (dawšaal?) must avoid sleeping flat on her back
845 for this will, according to some, cause her to have twins or problems in delivery. She must be careful to turn from side to side frequently.

841
843 A pregnant or menstruating woman should never touch or cast her
784 shadow on bows and arrows or rabbit nets. This is one reason why bows
[224] and arrows were hung up out of the way. It was a practice for these women to stay away from hunters.

843 Except for these proscriptions the pregnant woman continued her normal daily activities and worked until a few hours before delivery. With
[162] a multitude of tasks the Washo woman was always busy, but when the child
[631] arrived she stopped all normal work for a period of weeks. The attention of her small community of from 15 to 30 people, in about two to seven dwellings, was then focused upon her, her husband, and the child.

844 When a woman was about to be delivered she left camp and retired to a place nearby where a temporary shelter and bed had been prepared for her by her mother or an old woman who acted as a midwife (demedugiyt?). The bed was made in a shallow trench about as long as the woman. The ground was heated by raking hot earth into it. This layer of earth was covered with

2/1 [footnote appears on p. 114 -- Analyst]

Northern Paiute NR13

Thus the area in which the Washo lived was somewhat more varied than the territories of other groups, encompassing four life zones. This contrasted to the condition of the Paiute as a whole, where some bands existed in relative luxury for gatherers, and others occupied extremely inhospitable areas. The Washo, as a whole, enjoyed a fairly favorable area for hunting and gathering. In aboriginal times there seems to have been little effort to drive other groups out of the area when they entered it to hunt or gather, suggesting that the Washo felt they were amid plenty and that added exploitation would not deprive them. This does not hold for their view of the pinenut areas they utilized. They defended these with vigor, as they also defended fishing sites. There appears to have been a sufficient supply of nuts to permit very large gatherings in the fall at the beginning of the harvest season.

As with the Paiute, the Washo family appears to have been the primary unit of social organization. Families combined into bands that may or may not have had more permanence of membership than did those of the Paiute. Informants insist that families decided the course of their yearly movement independent of any band activities, either joining other bands or going on hunting and gathering treks -- often as far as the Pacific coast -- by themselves.

Band leaders had little, if any, more authority than did their counterparts among the Paiute. When bands gathered for antelope or rabbit hunting a shaman or rabbit boss took charge of the actual hunting operation as was true elsewhere in the Basin. Mountain sheep and mule deer were hunted in small informal groups, the latter occasionally in communal hunts.

The Washo recognized different areas within their territory but to what degree people or bands remained within these territories is not known. Lowie (1939, 301-52) sees incipient moiety formation in this division, but its only expression appears to have been the selection of members of teams to play games during the annual pinenut festival. Certain groups living in the mountains near what is today Woodfords were viewed by other Washo as "crazy," i.e., particularly brave, unpredictable and fierce. This was because, according to informants, these people had a great deal of association with California tribes (Downs, 1961b). The Woodfords group appears to have served traditionally as Washo "shock troops," being called upon for help whenever it was necessary to fight neighboring Indians. Freed (1960, 331) reports that a leader could assemble fighting men by sending a knotted deerhide string to his supporters. My own informants corroborated this but made it clear that no one was compelled to respond. There is no record of interband hostility even to the degree mentioned above for the Paiute.

Washo NT20
Achomawi NS5

NWA 462

ANTHROPOLOGICAL RECORDS

	To	Kl	Kd	Ha	Te	Ty	Pa	Ma	At	Sa	Ty	Wi	Ki	Ar
DIVISION OF LABOR														
2111. General seed gathering, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2112. Pine-nut gathering, both sexes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2113. Knocking down, male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2114. Picking up, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2115. Transporting, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	–
2115a. Male	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2116. Preparing, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2116a. Male	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•	–	•	–	–	•	–
2117. Cooking, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2117a. Male	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2118. Carrying water, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2118a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2119. Bear camp, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2119a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2120. Long distance, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2120a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2121. Fire tending (gathering wood), female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2121a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	–
2122. Hunting, male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2123. Fishing, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2123a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2124. Gathering: larvae, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2124a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2125. Grubs, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2125a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	–	–	•	•
2126. Grasshoppers, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2126a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2127. Nuts and mice catching, female	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•
2127a. Male	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•
2129. Pine nuts from st. cache, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2129a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–
Manufactures														
2130. House, female	–	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2130a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2131. Baskets, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2132. Skin preparation, female	–	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2132a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2133. Clothing, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2133a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2134. Moccasins, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2134a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2135. Nets, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2135a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2137. Skin blanket, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2137a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2139. Bowl, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2139a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2140. Weaving, female	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2140a. Male	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2141. Tobacco cut, male only	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
POLITICAL ORGANIZATION														
Political Group														
2161. Sovereign body is: localized band (named group of defined region)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2161 Village	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

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Washo NT20
Achomawi N55

CULTURE ELEM. DISTRIB.: KIV—STEWART: NORTHERN PAIUTE

	Yo	Kl	Kd	Ka	Yo	Yo	Ma	Ma	At	Sa	Ty	Wa	Kl	Al
2145. Temporary large organization: for annual dance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2146. For rabbit drive	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2146. For antelope drive	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2147. For mud-hen (or duck) drive	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2148. For pine-nut trip	•	•	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•
Chiefs (wihawavi or voimavi)														
2149. Band chief (tuvisi-voimavi) (leader of owned and localized group)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2150. Patrilineal succession	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•	–	–	–	–	–	–
2151. Community approval required	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–
2152. Chief's assistant	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	•	–	–	–	–	–	–
2153. Chief's successor (navoimamma)	–	•	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2154. Chief's messenger	•	•	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2155. Special chief: for dance (mugava voimavi)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2156. For rabbit drive (kamavoimavi)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2157. For antelope drive (tumavoimavi)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2158. For mud-hen (or duck) drive (naipavoimavi)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2159. For fishing	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2160. For hunting generally	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2161. For pine-nut trip	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2162. Village chief	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
PROPERTY														
2163. Band owned hunting territory	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2163a. Band owned valley in which lived	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2164. Band owned pine-nut territory	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2164a. Individuals owned pine-nut territory	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2167. Band owned fishing streams	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2168. Disputes settled by fight	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2169. Family owned seed plots	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2170. Family owned fishing place	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2171. Chattels all privately owned	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2172. All destroyed at death	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2173. Eagle aeries privately owned	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2173a. Cold springs public	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2173b. Hot springs public	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
WARFARE														
2174. Raids only	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2174a. Protection only	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2175. Warfare rare	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2176. War ritual	•	•	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2177. Captives	•	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
GAMES [illegible]														
2178. Unlosable, staffed, for chance (see, gambling)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2179. Special house for childbirth	–	–	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2179a. Dwelling-like	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2180. Domed willow house	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2180a. Regular house	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2181. Confinement (no. of days): 22	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	–	•	•	•	•	•	•
2181a. 30 ("month")	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2182. Ground smeared	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2183. Ground covered with grass, bark	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

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KINSHIP RELATIONS

N 606 2053. Paviotso: + (Curtis, 81).

BERDACHES OR TRANSVESTITES

N 836

2090. Tüvasa designated any sterile person as well as the sexually abnormal usually considered transvestites. K1: "Charlie Lowry is tüvasa. He can't make babies. His wife has four children and Charlie supports them because he loves babies, but someone else made them" (DG). T6: No tüvasa "because our Indians were good and taught their children right" (MN). MN once saw a Kuyui man at Virginia City who wore dresses, did washing, and so on. K1: JB knew of a Paiute man who wore dresses, did bead work, and so on, but he did not live in Fort Bidwell.

N [842 848]

2091. K2: See note 2090.

2091, 2092. Paviotso: + (Curtis, 80).

N [841] 2100. GN: Women tüvasa "never menstruate or have babies" (KH).

N [787] 2110. K1: To test a boy to see if he is really tüvasa, place him on a piece of paper or on some dry grass. On one side put a bow and some arrows, on the other put buckskin, awl, basketry (cloth, scissors, and thread), then set on fire paper or grass. Frightened child will pick up objects from one side as he saves himself. If he takes the bow and arrows, he is normal; if he takes the objects associated with women, he is tüvasa and will be funny and never make babies. The young man at Nixon who is said to be a berdache was submitted to the test and took the women's things. He isn't married (DG).

DIVISION OF LABOR

N 462 2136. T5: Most of the metates used were found already made.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

N 621 622 2141. Owens Valley: + (Steward, 304). Wa: CR thought there had been one "captain" for all Washo. Dick Bender named a separate "captain" for each of the three bands or divisions of the Washo.

W [621] 2142. Wa: "There were a considerable number of Washo villages, which were politically and socially independent of one another. Each community had its headman" (Curtis, 95).

W [622] 2150. Wa: + (Smith, notes).

N 634 535 2155. K2: DM is dance captain because he is interested in dancing. He engineered a big dance a few years ago and since then the other Indians have called him nügava voinavi and let him have charge of dances. Bull Tom, pusiava, and Harry ---, toraviseya, were old-time dance